DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 388 028 EC 304 383

AUTHOR Plucker, Jonathan A., Ed.; And Others
TITLE Fostering Creativity [and] Elementary School Programs in Gifted Education [and] Student Portfolios. What Educators and Parents Need To Know About...Series.
INSTITUTION National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, Storrs, CT.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE [94]
CONTRACT R206R00001
NOTE 14p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Creative Development; *Creativity; Educational Environment; Elementary Secondary Education; *Gifted; Parent Role; *Portfolio Assessment; *Special Programs; Teacher Role

ABSTRACT

Three pamphlets (Practitioner's Guides) present guidelines from the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented at the University of Connecticut. The guidelines are based on theory-driven quality research that is problem-based, practice-relevant, and consumer-oriented. Each pamphlet has a section summarizing research from the literature or topic notes as well as identifying specific implications for the home and/or classroom or school planning. Practitioner's Guides are titled: (1) "What Educators and Parents Need To Know about Fostering Creativity" (Jonathan A. Plucker, Editor); (2) "What Educators and Parents Need To Know about Elementary School Programs in Gifted Education" (Marcia A. B. Delcourt, Editor); and (3) "What Educators and Parents Need To Know about Student Portfolios" (Karen Kettle, Editor). Each booklet contains references. (DB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

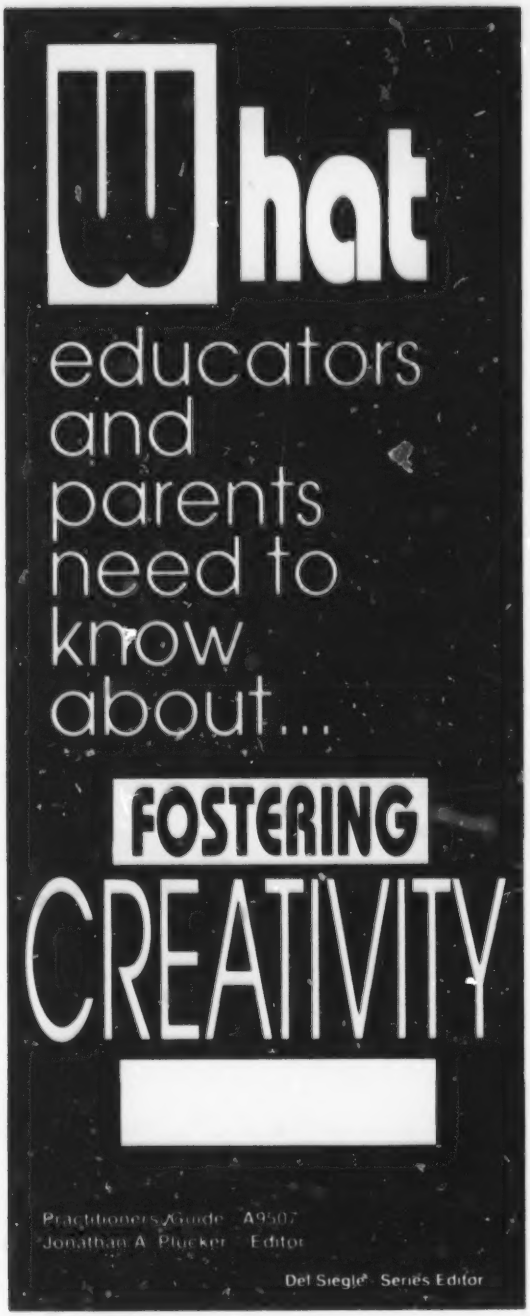
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 388 028

What Educators and Parents Need To Know about... Fostering Creativity [and] Elementary School Programs in Gifted Education [and] Student Portfolios.
Plucker, Jonathan A.
And Others

EC 304383

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

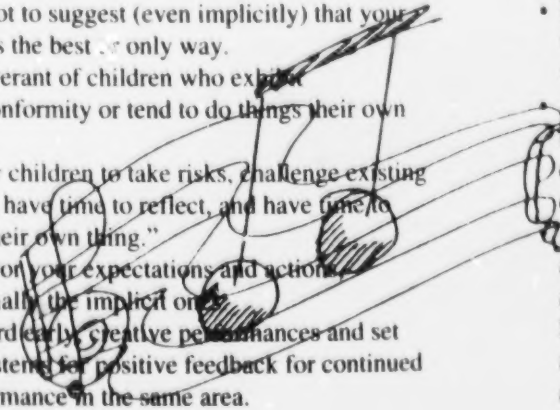

What
educators
and
parents
need to
know
about...
FOSTERING
CREATIVITY
Practitioner's Guide #9507
Jonathan A. Plucker, Editor
Del Siegle, Series Editor

IMPLICATIONS —FOR— HOME and CLASSROOM

*Recent research shows that creativity is present in **all** children, regardless of their age, race, socioeconomic status, and learning differences. Listed below are typically asked student questions followed by creativity-fostering suggestions for dealing with them:*

"But why isn't this the right answer?"

- Emphasize curricula and activities that avoid predictable, only one correct response outcomes.
- Try not to suggest (even implicitly) that your way is the best or only way.
- Be tolerant of children who exhibit nonconformity or tend to do things their own way.
- Allow children to take risks, challenge existing ideas, have time to reflect, and have time to "do their own thing."
- Monitor your expectations and actions, especially the implicit ones.
- Reward early creative performances and set up systems for positive feedback for continued performance in the same area.



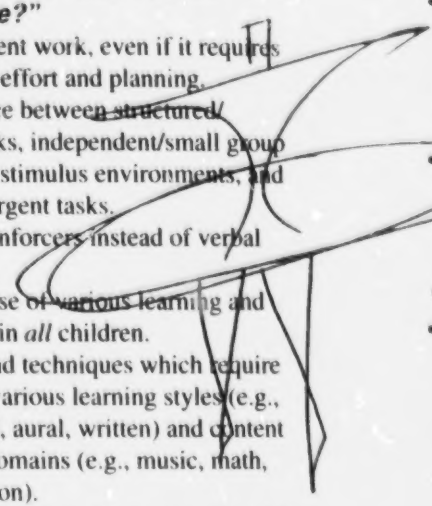
- Use alternative methods such as portfolios and performance-based assessments to assess creative potential.
- De-emphasize grades as the "goal" of learning. Accentuate the joy of learning and creating.

"Can't I work alone? Can't we do something else?"

- Allow independent work, even if it requires some additional effort and planning.
- Strive for balance between structured/unstructured tasks, independent/small group work, rich/open stimulus environments, and convergent/divergent tasks.
- Use concrete reinforcers instead of verbal reinforcers.
- Encourage the use of various learning and cognitive styles in *all* children.
- Use materials and techniques which require children to use various learning styles (e.g., hands-on, visual, aural, written) and content from different domains (e.g., music, math, physical education).
- Teach children the steps of revising, reworking, and refining their creative ideas, since creating an original idea is only the first step.

"Can I explain? I'd like to show it to the class/my friends."

- Encourage children to share their creative work with other children and adults both within and out of school.
- Allow children to utilize divergent thinking skills, ask questions that require them to defend their reasoning, and expose them to constructive criticism.
- Ask children to describe their creative process and motivations if they give unexpected answers or complete unusual projects. Sometimes a seemingly incorrect or strange answer is achieved using an insightful, exciting approach.

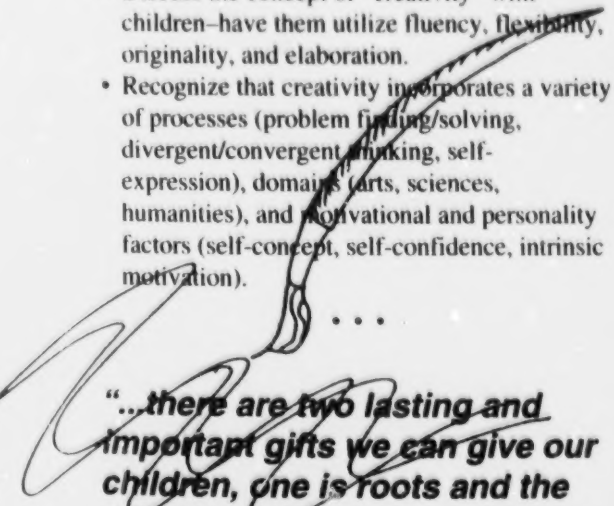


"I can't think of anything."

- Provide environments that stimulate and encourage creative ideas. Reward a broad range of creative behaviors.
- Be a mentor to a child who displays interest in your particular domain or field of expertise.
- Teach students creativity enhancement techniques (e.g., SCAMPER, brainstorming, synectics, attribute listing) to use with their science fair projects, art activities, and writing assignments to design a more creative product.
- Expose your child to various types of tasks and activities, emphasizing variety in music, family and/or field trips, TV viewing, reading material, hobbies, toys, etc.

"But I'm not doing this at home/school."

- Reinforce creative behaviors at home and at school. Teachers, let parents know what their child is doing at school and explain how parents can help at home. Parents, let teachers know what you're doing at home with your child and ask teachers how you can reinforce the creative behaviors being taught in school.
- Discuss the concept of "creativity" with children–have them utilize fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration.
- Recognize that creativity incorporates a variety of processes (problem finding/solving, divergent/convergent thinking, self-expression), domains (arts, sciences, humanities), and motivational and personality factors (self-concept, self-confidence, intrinsic motivation).



. . .

"...there are two lasting and important gifts we can give our children, one is roots and the other is wings." –Hodding Carter

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

research FACTS

Children can be taught to be more creative (Torrance, 1987).

Some researchers believe that all children possess the skills and processes necessary to produce creative work (Runco, 1993; Weisberg, 1986).

People tend to underestimate the originality of the work of others (Runco, 1989).

Children tend to be less creative when outside constraints are placed upon their creativity (Hennessey & Amabile, 1988).

Eminent creators such as Einstein, Picasso, and Martha Graham exhibited a high degree of self-promotion and lack of conformity (Gardner, 1993).

References

Gardner, H. (1993). *Creating minds*. New York: Basic Books.

Hennessey, B. A., & Amabile, T. M. (1988). The conditions of creativity. In R. J. Sternberg (Ed.), *The nature of creativity* (pp. 11-38). Camridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Runco, M. A. (1989). Parents' and teachers' ratings of the creativity of children. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, 4*, 73-83.

Runco, M. A. (1993). *Creativity as an educational objective for disadvantaged students*. Storrs, CT: The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented.

Torrance, E. P. (1987). Can we teach children to think creatively? In S. G. Isaksen (Ed.), *Frontiers of creativity research*. Buffalo, NY: Bearly Limited.

Weisberg, R. W. (1986). *Creativity: Genius and other myths*. New York: W. H. Freeman.

What is the NRC/GT?

The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (NRC/GT) is funded under the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, United States Department of Education. The mission of the NRC/GT is to plan and conduct theory-driven quality research that is problem-based, practice-relevant, and consumer-oriented.

Products available from The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented...

Research-Based Decision Making Series

These papers are designed to advise practitioners and policymakers about the most defensible practices that can be implemented based on accumulated research evidence. Papers in the Research-Based Decision Making Series are available in full length and executive summary formats.

Research Monographs

Research Monographs describe research studies completed by the NRC/GT. These comprehensive technical reports are available in full length and executive summary formats.

Practitioners' Guides

These tri-fold brochures feature easy-to-understand research findings coupled with practical implications for classrooms and homes on topics of interest to educators and parents.

Video Training Tapes

One-hour tapes are available of all our popular teacher training satellite broadcasts. Reproducible teacher resource guides are included with each tape.

Resource Books

These include information on various topics or sources of information in the field of gifted and talented education.

Collaborative Research Series

Applied or action research is featured rather than a review of extant literature. They are available as full length papers and executive summaries.

NRC G/T

The University of Connecticut
The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented
362 Fairfield Road, U-7
Storrs, CT 06269-2007

What educators and parents need to know about...

Elementary School Programs in Gifted Education

Practitioners' Guide - A9508

Marcia A. B. Delcourt - Editor

Del Siegle - Series Editor

IMPLICATIONS —FOR— SCHOOL PLANNING

What are the options?

The most frequently used program arrangements nationwide are within-class programs, pull-out programs, separate classes, and special schools. Identification of students for any of these programs could range from the top 2 - 25% of a school's population.

Within-Class Programs address the needs of high ability students who are in heterogeneously grouped classes 100% of the time. Students attend classes with their same-age peers. The percentage of high ability students in these classes may vary from 1% to 50% or more.

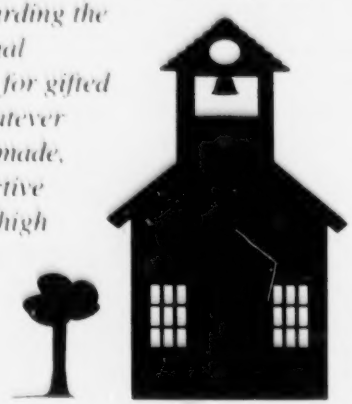
Pull-Out Programs offer students services in a resource room format for a specific amount of time per week. Many programs operate for a minimum of two hours each week.

In schools with heterogeneous populations, those in **Separate Classes** receive their instruction in homogeneous groups for all content-area courses.

Students attending **Separate Schools** are grouped with peers of similar ability on a full-time basis in schools designated for the gifted and talented.

What key traits are consistent across exemplary models of all four program types?

Differing communities will make different decisions regarding the best educational arrangements for gifted learners. Whatever decisions are made, however, effective programs for high ability students will share some common traits.



Leadership

In an exemplary model, there is a strong administrative voice to represent and implement the program for gifted learners. This individual oversees the development of long-term goals and objectives and communicates this information to everyone in the school and community. This leader ensures that staff and community members understand and support the program.

Atmosphere and Environment

An accepting atmosphere throughout the school promotes a positive attitude toward the program for the gifted and talented among students, parents, teachers, and administrators. In these programs, students are comfortable with their educational and social environments. Staff members are given the time, materials, and training to address the needs of gifted learners.

Communication

Clear and frequent communication is maintained between parents/guardians, teachers, students, and administrators regarding the program. This is accomplished through both general strategies (e.g., newsletters) and individual contacts (e.g., phone calls or meetings). These communications include commendations as well as recommendations about program activities and student performance.

Curriculum and Instruction

Teachers are flexible in matching both curriculum and instruction to student needs. They employ a variety of instructional techniques to complement student characteristics, and students feel that they are appropriately challenged. For example, a match is sought between the pacing of the curriculum and the student's ability in a given subject.

Student Needs

Academic staff and administrators are committed to serving students from traditionally underrepresented populations. They take assertive roles in selecting these students for their programs and focus on being sensitive to the needs of these students once they have entered the programs.

For more information consult:

Cornell, D. G., Delcourt, M. A. B., Goldberg, M. D., & Bland, L. C. (1992). Learning characteristics of elementary students entering gifted programs: The learning outcomes project at the University of Virginia. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted, 15*, 309-331.

Delcourt, M. A. B., & Evans, K. (1994). *Qualitative extension of the learning outcomes study* (Report No. RM94110). Storrs, CT: The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented.

research FACTS

hildren in programs for the gifted obtain higher achievement scores than their gifted peers who are not in such programs.

successful program for the gifted does not necessarily depend on the type of programming arrangement (within class program, pull-out program, separate class, special school). While one type of arrangement may be more beneficial for a particular child, it is the way the program is implemented that determines its impact.

arents are the least satisfied with programs for which they perceive there is little or no communication between the home and the school.

uccessful programs challenge students through high level content and pacing of the curriculum, while providing many opportunities for these students to make their own choices and to have control over their learning environment.

uccessful programs focus on the identification of underrepresented populations of students in their written policies and provide support for teachers to address their students' learning needs.

istrict coordinators in successful programs invite parents to school events, distribute questionnaires about potential family interaction with the school, and keep parents informed about their child's educational program.

What is the NRC/GT?

The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (NRC/GT) is funded under the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, United States Department of Education. The mission of the NRC/GT is to plan and conduct theory-driven quality research that is problem-based, practice-relevant, and consumer-oriented.

Products available from The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented...

Research-Based Decision Making Series

These papers are designed to advise practitioners and policymakers about the most defensible practices that can be implemented based on accumulated research evidence. Papers in the Research-Based Decision Making Series are available in full length and executive summary formats.

Research Monographs

Research Monographs describe research studies completed by the NRC/GT. These comprehensive technical reports are available in full length and executive summary formats.

Practitioners' Guides

These tri-fold brochures feature easy-to-understand research findings coupled with practical implications for classrooms and homes on topics of interest to educators and parents.

Video Training Tapes

One-hour tapes are available of all our popular teacher training satellite broadcasts. Reproducible teacher resource guides are included with each tape.

Resource Books

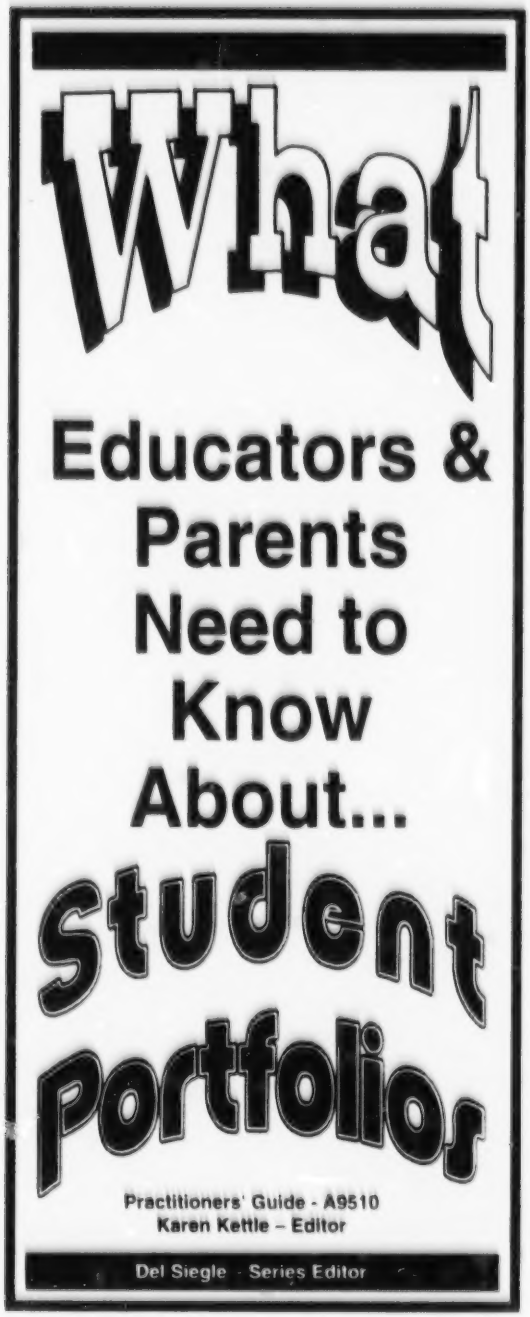
These include information on various topics or sources of information in the field of gifted and talented education.

Collaborative Research Series

Applied or action research is featured rather than a review of extant literature. They are available as full length papers and executive summaries.

NRC G/T

The University of Connecticut
The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented
362 Fairfield Road, U-7
Storrs, CT 06269-2007


What
Educators &
Parents
Need to
Know
About...
student
portfolios
Practitioners' Guide - A9510
Karen Kettle – Editor
Del Siegle - Series Editor

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM

"A portfolio is more than just a container full of stuff. It's a systematic and organized collection of evidence used by the teacher and student to monitor growth of the student's knowledge, skills, and attitudes in a specific subject area."

– Vavrus (1990, p. 48)

Portfolios have traditionally been used within the artistic community, but recently this authentic form of assessment has captured the attention of a wider audience. A portfolio is a carefully selected collection of a student's efforts, achievements, and reflections that provides a complete picture of the student's learning.

Portfolios allow students to:

- *demonstrate their skills, strengths, diversity, and interests*
- *select items that reflect their learning (struggles, best work, etc.)*
- *share their learning with an interested audience*
- *set future goals*
- *trace the development of their talent over time*
- *reflect on their learning*
- *make connections.*

There are as many varieties of portfolios as there are classrooms. Portfolios may be found in hanging file folders, boxes, notebooks, or on videotapes and laser discs. They may contain works in progress, finished products, pictures, journals, creative endeavors, cassettes, video tapes, transcripts, and other evidence of performances.

Portfolios help students to tell the story of their own learning and talent development. Choice and reflection are key elements. Assembling a portfolio and reflecting on personal achievements develops ownership and understanding of learning preferences and processes. Portfolios may be shared with teachers and parents as well as with interested peers and community members. Parents may be invited to a portfolio conference where their child presents his/her portfolio and reflects on his/her learning.

Portfolios are useful within the field of gifted education. They provide a logical way to trace talent development and to record modifications such as curriculum compacting. Compacting allows teachers to identify student strengths, document mastery of content, and replace learned material with challenging opportunities. Examples of enrichment activities, acceleration opportunities, and evidence of involvement with real-world problems and audiences can be included.

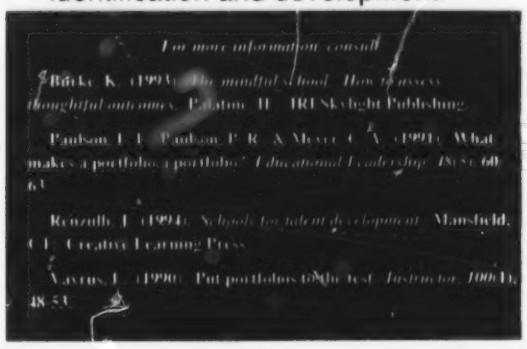
Assessment of portfolios may include a combination of self-assessment, teacher assessment of individual items, and assessment from appropriate audiences. Portfolio assessment complements traditional forms of student evaluation because it provides a more complex and comprehensive view of student learning over time and allows for individual expression.

Before using portfolios, teachers should consider the following planning issues:

1) *What is the purpose of the portfolio?*
2) *What items should be included?*
3) *How will the items be selected and organized?*
4) *How will the portfolios be stored?*
5) *How will the portfolios be assessed?*
6) *What formats will be used to allow students to share their portfolios?*

—topic— NOTES

- **Portfolios** accurately illustrate student growth over time.
- **Portfolios** offer students an opportunity to learn about their own learning.
- **Portfolios** allow students to document and share their learning progress.
- **Portfolios** encourage students to develop the abilities they need to become self-directed learners.
- **Portfolios** provide profiles of student strengths that highlight interests, talents, learning styles, and achievements.
- **Portfolios** provide a forum for talent identification and development.


For more information consult
Paulson, F. L., Paulson, P. R., & Meyer, C. A. (1991). What makes a portfolio a portfolio? Educational Leadership, 48(5), 60-63.
Renzulli, J. (1994). Schools for talent development. Mansfield, CT: Creative Learning Press.

What is the NRC/GT?

The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (NRC/GT) is funded under the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, United States Department of Education. The mission of the NRC/GT is to plan and conduct theory-driven quality research that is problem-based, practice-relevant, and consumer-oriented.

Products available from The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented...

Research-Based Decision Making Series

These papers are designed to advise practitioners and policymakers about the most defensible practices that can be implemented based on accumulated research evidence. Papers in the Research-Based Decision Making Series are available in full length and executive summary formats.

Research Monographs

Research Monographs describe research studies completed by the NRC/GT. These comprehensive technical reports are available in full length and executive summary formats.

Practitioners' Guides

These tri-fold brochures feature easy-to-understand research findings coupled with practical implications for classrooms and homes on topics of interest to educators and parents.

Video Training Tapes

One-hour tapes are available on all our popular teacher training satellite broadcasts. Reproducible teacher resource guides are included with each tape.

Resource Booklets

These include information on various topics or sources of information in the field of gifted and talented education.

Collaborative Research Studies

Applied or action research is featured rather than a review of extant literature. They are available as full length papers and executive summaries.

NRC G/T

The University of Connecticut
The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented
362 Fairfield Road, U-7
Storrs, CT 06269-2007

BEST COPY AVAILABLE